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Short communications

MINERAL ELEMENT CONTENT OF CHAMOMILE

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Mineral components play an important role as adjuvants in the therapeutical activity of chamomile. Considering their content in the different species, an interesting observation was that the wild populations are richer in distribution of mineral elements than the cultivated Degumil type, while ratios of K/Na and Ca/Mg in this cultivated type are many times higher than in wild chamomile populations.

Chamomile tea extract (infusion) is widely used in digestion complains. Macro- and microelement content of the infusion is relatively low in which relatively high concentrations of potassium, calcium and magnesium were found. The dissolution of mineral elements in tea was between 10% and 26% for most of the elements with the highest value attributed to magnesium (26%).

Keywords: chamomile, mineral elements

The pharmacological effect of medicinal drugs or extracts cannot be attributed only to their bioactive components but to mineral elements as well, since the preparation of extracts (e.g. aqueous) results in the presence of both organic (flavonoids, sesquiterpenes, etc.) and inorganic compounds.

Chamomile, *Matricaria recutita* L. (Asteraceae) is important mostly for its antiphlogistic activity ((-)-α-bisabolol, chamazulene, etc.) (TUBARO et al., 1984) but occurrence of macro- and microelements in it contributes to its therapeutical activity and makes it of higher value. Mineral elements play an important role in physiological processes of living organisms.

Mineral elements absorbed and accumulated by plants are transported to the human organism by nutrition uptake. Zinc and manganese are indispensable for the activation of several enzymes in the metabolism of carbohydrates, fatty acids, proteins and nucleic acids. In many cases there is a competition between magnesium and

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